

COVER PAGE

BLM

**MEASURING ATTRIBUTES OF WILDERNESS CHARACTER
WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY**

Needles Field Office

**CDCA318/VIDAL
SEPTEMBER 2015**



Summary of Analysis*

Area Unique Identifier: CDCA318/Vidal

Summary

Results of analysis:

(Note: explain the inventory findings for the entirety of the inventory unit. When wilderness characteristics have been identified in an area that is smaller than the size of the total inventory unit, explain why certain portions of the inventory unit are not included within the lands with wilderness characteristics (e.g. the inventory found that certain parts lacked naturalness).

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? Yes ☒ No ☐
2. Does the area appear to be natural? Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A ☐
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒
4. Does the area have supplemental values? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

Check one:

☐ The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as lands with wilderness characteristics.

☒ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

Ramona Daniels, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Wilderness Coordinator,
September 10, 2015

Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name:  Title: _____

Date: 10-20-15

* This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-3.

FORM 1

Documentation of BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings from Previous Inventory on Record

1. Is there existing BLM wilderness characteristics inventory information on all or part of this area?

☐ **No** (Go to Form 2)

☒ **Yes** (If yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the unique identifiers for those areas.):

a) Inventory Source: California Desert Conservation Area Wilderness Inventory 1979

b) Inventory Area Unique Identifier(s): CDCA318

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s): USGS, California 1:100,000: 34114-a1 Parker00000000

d) BLM District(s)/Field Office(s): California Desert District/Needles Field Office

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record:

Existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics (if more than one BLM inventory area is associated with the area, list each area and answer each question individually for each inventory area):

Inventory Source: Needles Field Office Inventory

Area Unique Identifier	Sufficient Size? Yes/No (acres)	Naturalness? Yes/No	Outstanding Solitude? Yes/No	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Yes/No	Supplemental Values? Yes/No
CDCA318	Y	N	N	N	Y

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier: **CDCA318/Vidal**

Acreage: **27,192 acres**

(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate each separately).

In completing steps (1)-(5), use additional space as necessary.

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception in the space provided below),

Yes ☒ No ☐

Note: If "No" is checked the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions below.

Description (describe the boundaries of the area--wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.):

This area is bordered on the north by Highway 62; on the west, by U.S. Highway 95; on the south, by the railroad and on the east by Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation lands.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A ☐

Note: If "No" is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions below.

Description (include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses/activities):

This unit sits immediately adjacent to the Colorado River Aqueduct flood control wash which runs north to south through the center of the unit. The area has also been heavily impacted over the years by the continuous updating and original development of the the railroad and powerlines located in the southern half of the unit. A communication center and gauging system are located on the northern side of the unit and WWII and Desert Strike military maneuvers occurred in the west half. There is little that remains in its natural condition.

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A ☐

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude):

After the creation of 18 wilderness units within the Needles Field Office in 1994, a group of rock-hounders, backcountry explorers and recreationalists were refocused into new locations. The Chemehuevi Valley and adjacent areas to the southeast became one of those focused areas. With this change highway vehicle traffic and backcountry recreation has greatly increased and the outstanding opportunities for solitude are very limited.

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A ✓

Note: If "No" is checked for both 3 and 4 the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for question 5.

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation):

This area is completely confined by infrastructure and is considered lands without outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A ✓

Description:

The California Desert Protection Act states that the BLM must "protect and preserve historical and cultural values of the California desert associated with ancient Indian cultures, patterns of western exploration and settlement, and sites exemplifying the mining, ranching and railroading history of the Old West". Most recently, the former California/Arizona WWII Troop Camps have been added to areas of protection.

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY

APPENDIX C – ROUTE ANALYSIS¹

(Factors to consider when determining whether a route is a road² for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes.)

Route Analysis Table

Route #		Purpose	Row	Construction Mechanically or Improved Mechanically	Is it in regular or continuous use	Maintenance if needed	WIU Road	Photo Points
1	NS750	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
2	NS751	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
3	NS752	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
4	NS753	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
5	NS876	Recreation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
7	NS765	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
8	NS784	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
9	NS781	Utility	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
10	NS785	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
11	NS786	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
12	NS787	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
13	NS770	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
14	NS782	Recreation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
15	Ns783	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	
16	NS880	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes	

Route Map:

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Area Unique Identifier: **CDCA318/VIDAL**

Route or Route Segment³ Name and/or Identifier: **See Table**

(Include Transportation Plan Identifier, if known, and include route number supplied by citizen information, when available.)

I. LOCATION:

Refer to above map **CDCA318/VIDAL** and BLM corporate data (GIS) located at the California State Office. List photo point references (where applicable) or reference attached photo log:

Describe:

As stated in Form 2, This area is bordered on the north by Highway 62; on the west, by U.S. Highway 95; on the south, by a the railroad and on the east by Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation lands.

¹ This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-3.

² Road: An access route which has been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road.

a. Improved and maintained – Actions taken physically by people to keep the road open to vehicle traffic. —Improved does not necessarily mean formal construction. —Maintained does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.

b. Mechanical means – Use of hand or power machinery or tools.

c. Relatively regular and continuous use – Vehicular use that has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources, access roads to maintained recreation sites or facilities, or access roads to mining claims.

³ If a portion of a route is found to meet the wilderness inventory road criteria (see Part III) and the remainder does not meet these criteria (e.g., a cherrystem road with a primitive route continuing beyond a certain point), identify each segment and explain the rationale for the separate findings under pertinent criteria.

II. ROUTE CONTEXT

- A. Current Purpose⁴ (if any) of Route: (Examples: Rangeland/Livestock Improvements (stock tank, developed spring, reservoir, fence, corral), Inholdings (ranch, farmhouse), Mine Site, Concentrated Use Site (camp site), Recreation, Utilities (transmission line, telephone, pipeline), Administrative (project maintenance, communication site, vegetation treatment)).

Describe:

The BLM Needles Field Office (NFO) developed the Mojave Adventure Route System (MARS). This system of designated routes was developed to minimize resource damage, as well as providing a system of backcountry touring routes, which offer ample recreational experiences: (i.e., camping, hunting, rock hounding, etc.). The NFO receives funding annually from both federal and state programs to maintain and monitor on a need to basis, the management of these routes also includes the placement of field cameras for the monitoring of use, repairing flood damage, and the placement of route signs and informational kiosks.

- B. Right-of-Way (ROW):

1. Is there a ROW associated with this route?

Yes ✓ No Unknown

2. If yes, what is the stated purpose of the ROW? **Metropolitan Water District**

3. Is the ROW still being used for this purpose?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Unknown or N/A ☐

Explain:

An energy right-of-way, which supports 250-foot towers and electrical high-tension lines, runs through the unit. There is also a Congressional Right-of-Way for the Colorado River Aqueduct within the area.

III. WILDERNESS INVENTORY ROAD CRITERIA

A. Evidence of construction or improvement using mechanical means:

Yes ☒ (if either A.1 or A.2 is checked "yes" below) No ☐ (if both A.1 and A.2 are checked "no" below)

1. Construction: (Is there evidence that the route or route segment was originally constructed using mechanical means?) Yes ☒ No ☐

Examples: Paved ☐ Bladed ☒ Graveled ☐ Roadside Berms ☒ Cut/Fill ☒ Other ☐

Describe: **This information can be found in the general history of the area.**

⁴ The purpose of a route is not a deciding factor in determining whether a route is a road for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes. The purpose of a route does provide context for factors on which such a determination may be based, particularly the question of whether maintenance of the route ensures relatively regular and continuous use. The purpose also helps to determine whether maintenance that may so far have been unnecessary to ensure such use would be approved by BLM when the need arises.

2. Improvements: (Is there evidence of improvements using mechanical means to facilitate access?) Yes ☒ No ☐ If "yes": by Hand Tools ☐ by Machine ☐

Examples: Culverts ☐ Hardened Stream Crossings ☐ Bridges ☐ Drainage ☒ Barriers ☐ Other ☐

Describe: **BLM maintenance and utilities continue to maintain the area for ease of access after flooding events.**

B. Maintenance: (Is there evidence of maintenance that would ensure *relatively* regular and continuous use?): Yes ☒ (if either B.1 or B.2 is checked "yes" below) No ☐ (if both B.1 and B.2 are checked "no" below)

1. Is there Evidence or Documentation of Maintenance using hand tools or machinery?

Yes ☒ No ☐ If "yes": by Hand Tools ☐ by Machine ☐

Explain: Utility Companies makes semi-annual repairs to the area roads, BLM maintenance team monitors and signs annually as needed.

2. If the route or route segment is in good⁵ condition, but there is no evidence of maintenance, would mechanical maintenance with hand tools or machines be approved by BLM to meet the purpose(s) of the route in the event this route became impassable?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Explain: As part of the MARS, the route would continue to receive maintenance by the NFO on a need to basis.

⁵ Good condition would be a condition that ensures regular and continuous use relative to the purposes of the route. Consider whether the route can be clearly followed in the field over its entire course and whether all or any portion of the route contains any impediments to travel.

C. Relatively regular and continuous use: (Does the route or route segment ensure relatively regular and continuous use?) Yes ☒ No ☐

Describe evidence (e.g., direct, vehicles or vehicle tracks observed, or indirect, evidence of use associated with purpose of the route such as maintenance of facility that route accesses) and other rationale for whether use has occurred and will continue to occur on a *relatively* regular basis (i.e., regular and continuous use relative to the purpose(s) of the route).⁶

Describe: **See above information.**

IV. CONCLUSION:

Does the route or route segment⁷ meet the definition of a wilderness inventory road (i.e., are items III.A and III.B and III.C all checked yes)?

Yes ☒ = Wilderness Inventory Road No ☐ = Not a road for wilderness inventory purposes

Explanation⁸:

Routes belonging to the Designated Route System will be maintained as needed. Routes not designated through the land plan will not be considered a route and therefore will be considered closed.

Closed routes will be evaluated for their use. Routes used to maintain Grazing Infrastructure (Taylor Grazing Act), Herd Management Areas and facilities for the California Fish and Wildlife Department (California Desert Protection Act) will be closed with gates, and barricades, all other routes will be closed through restoration and/or barricades.

Evaluator(s):  Date: 10/10/2015

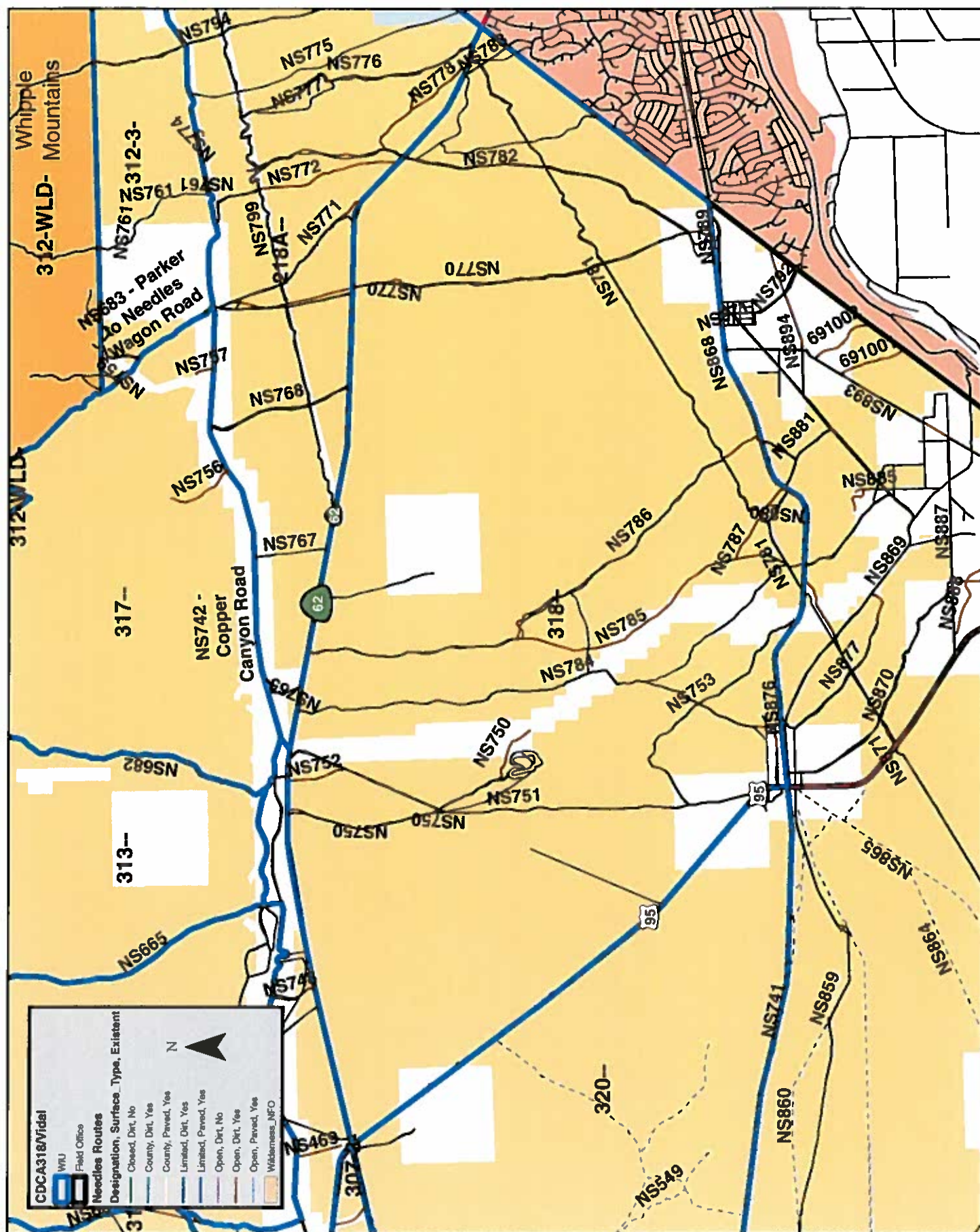
⁶ Include estimate of travel rates for the stated purposes, e.g., trips/day or week or month or season or year or even multiple years in some facility maintenance cases.

⁷ If part of the route meets the wilderness inventory road definition and the remainder does not, describe the segment meeting the definition and any remaining portion not meeting the definition and why.

⁸ Describe and explain rationale for any discrepancies with citizen proposals.

Office: Needles Field Office
Unit: CDCA318/Vidal

**WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY
APPENDIX D – PHOTO LOG**



WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY

APPENDIX D - PHOTO LOG

Photographer(s): Nate Stewart

Inventory Area Unique Identifier 318

Date	Frame #	Camera Direction	Description	GPS/UTM Location	Township	Range	Sec.	Photo Point #
6-6	1A P606 0001	N	Hwy 95	3,781,654 N 726,612 E				1
	1A P606 0004	E	"	"				"
	8A P606 0028	N	690785 / 690786	3,783,043 N 732,143 E				2
	8A P606 0030	S	"	"				"
	8A P606 0031	E	"	"				"
	8A P606 0034	W	"	"				"
	6A P606 0021	N	690789 / 690730	3,774,488 N 739,234 E				3
	6A P606 0022	W	"	"				"
✓	5A P606 0017	N	690868 / 690883	3,777,461 N 73500 E				4
	5A P606 0018	W	"	"				"

CDCA 318 – Vidal Photo Points

Point 1



North



East

Point 2

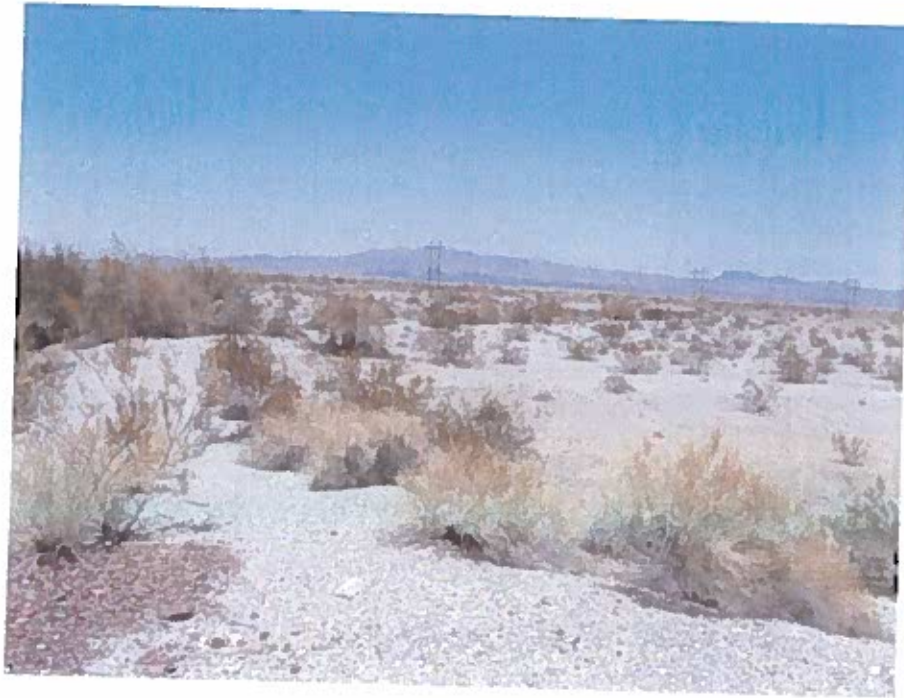


North



South

Point 4



North



West